Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Message Text

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SUBJECT: NON-PAPER TO DOBRYNIN ON SOUTH AFRICAN NUCLEAR TEST SITE

1. DURING MARCH 16 LUNCHEON MEETING WITH DOBRYNIN THE SECRETARY HANDED OVER THE FOLLOWING NON-PAPER ON THE SOUTH AFRICAN NUCLEAR TEST SITE: (BEGIN TEXT)

WE HAVE STUDIED CAREFULLY YOUR MESSAGE ON THE SOUTH AFRICAN NUCLEAR SITUATION. WE APPRECIATE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO CONTINUE THE CONSTRUCTIVE EXCHANGE WHICH BEGAN LAST AUGUST.

WE HAVE NO INFORMATION THAT A NEW AND SEPARATE POSSIBLE TEST SITE IS UNDER CONSTRUCTION OR THAT SIGNIFICANT NEW TEST-RELATED ACTIVITY IS BEING UNDERTAKEN AT THE SITE IN THE KALAHARI. WE HAVE INFORMATION THAT THERE IS CONTINUING

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ACTIVITY AT THE KALAHARI SITE BUT OUR EXPERTS HAVE NOT CONCLUDED THAT THIS PRESENT ACTIVITY REPRESENTS PREPARATION FOR CONDUCTING A NUCLEAR EXPLOSION.

AS YOU ARE AWARE THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT HAS STATED THAT IT DOES NOT INTEND TO PRODUCE OR TEST A NUCLEAR EXPLOSIVE. OUR INFORMATION DOES NOT LEAD US TO CONCLUDE

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THAT THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT IS PROCEEDING TO ACT

CONTRARY TO THOSE ASSURANCES. NONETHELESS, WE CONTINUE TO BE CONCERNED WITH THE SITUATION AND ARE ACTIVELY WORKING TOWARD THE OBJECTIVE OF HAVING ALL SOUTH AFRICAN NUCLEAR ACTIVITIES BROUGHT UNDER FULL IAEA SAFEGUARDS.

WE HAVE NO INFORMATION ON THE CONSTRUCTION OF REACTORS DEDICATED TO PLUTONIUM PRODUCTION IN SOUTH AFRICA. THE ONLY REACTORS KNOWN TO BE UNDER CONSTRUCTION ARE THE TWO POWER REACTORS AT KOEBURG. THESE POWER REACTORS WILL BE SUBJECT TO IAEA SAFEGUARDS AND COMMITMENTS AGAINST THE USE OF ANY PRODUCED MATERIAL IN NUCLEAR EXPLOSIVE DEVICES. THE AGREEMENT BETWEEN FRANCE (THE REACTOR SUPPLIER) AND SOUTH AFRICA ALSO PROHIBITS THE REPROCESSING IN SOUTH AFRICA OF THE REACTORS' SPENT FUEL. AS FOR A NEW FACILITY FOR THE PRODUCTION OF ENRICHED URANIUM, WE UNDERSTAND THAT THE SOUTH AFRICAN AUTHORITIES HAVE REDUCED THE SIZE OF THE PROPOSED EXPANSION OF THE EXISTING URANIUM ENRICHMENT FACILITY AT VALINDABA SO AS TO LIMIT ITS CAPACITY TO FUELING SOUTH AFRICAN REACTORS WITH LOW ENRICHED URANIUM. WE WOULD BE PLEASED TO RECEIVE ANY ADDITIONAL INFORMATION YOU HAVE THAT THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT MAY BE WORKING ON A SECOND TEST RANGE AND BUILDING A REACTOR DEDICATED TO PLUTONIUM PRODUCTION.

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WE AGREE THAT IT IS IMPORTANT TO PREVENT THE DEVELOPMENT OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS BY SOUTH AFRICA AND TO INDUCE SOUTH AFRICA TO ADHERE TO THE TREATY ON THE NONPROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND TO PLACE ALL ITS NUCLEAR FACILITIES UNDER INTERNATIONAL SAFEGUARDS. IN THIS CONNECTION, WE HAVE PUT TO THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT A PROPOSAL FOR EARLY ESTABLISHMENT OF AN INTERNATIONAL PRESENCE AT THE VALINDABA ENRICHMENT FACILITY TO DEVELOP A FORMAL SAFEGUARDS PROGRAM TO BE ADMINISTERED BY THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY. WE BELIEVE THAT OUR WILLINGNESS TO CONTINUE SOME NUCLEAR COOPERATION UNDER THOSE CONDITIONS WOULD BE A SIGNIFICANT INDUCEMENT FOR THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT TO TAKE THE NECESSARY ACTION.

WE HAVE NOTED YOUR REFERENCE TO THE "POSSIBILITIES" OF THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL. WHILE WE DO NOT RULE OUT EVENTUAL RECOURSE TO THE COUNCIL, WE DO NOT BELIEVE THAT COUNCIL ACTION AT THIS TIME WOULD BE HELPFUL IN REALIZING THE ABOVE OBJECTIVES. WE VALUE THE CLOSE CONSULTATION WHICH THE USSR AND THE UNITED STATES HAVE MAINTAINED ON THIS ISSUE, AND WE TRUST THAT YOU WOULD CONSULT WITH US PRIOR TO TAKING ANY FURTHER STEPS. WE INTEND TO CONTINUE OUR

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CONSULTATIONS WITH YOU IN THE COOPERATIVE SPIRIT THAT HAS MARKED THEM THROUGHOUT. (END TEXT)

2. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF SOVIET MESSAGE TO WHICH OUR NON-PAPER RESPONDED:

(BEGIN TEXT)

WE WOULD LIKE TO DRAW YOUR ATTENTION ONCE AGAIN TO THE QUESTION ON WHICH WE ALREADY HAD A FRANK AND USEFUL EXCHANGE OF OPINIONS LAST AUGUST, NAMELY, TO THE QUESTION OF PREVENTING THE REALIZATION BY THE AUTHORITIES OF SOUTH AFRICA OF THEIR PLANS TO DEVELOP NUCLEAR WEAPONS.

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WE MET WITH SATISFACTION YOUR COMMUNICATION CONCERNING STEPS TAKEN BY THE UNITED STATES TO EXERT RESTRAINING INFLUENCE ON THE GOVERNMENT OF SOUTH AFRICA. AS YOU HAVE INFORMED US, SOUTH AFRICAN AUTHORITIES GAVE ASSURANCES TO THE US GOVERNMENT THAT SOUTH AFRICA WOULD NOT CONDUCT ANY NUCLEAR TEST EXPLOSIONS. IT IS ALSO KNOWN THAT SOUTH AFRICAN AUTHORITIES MADE PUBLIC STATEMENTS TO THAT EFFECT. HOWEVER, COMPETENT SOVIET ORGANIZATIONS HAVE DATA THAT WORK IS CONTINUED IN SOUTH AFRICA TO DEVELOP NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND PREPARE TEST EXPLOSIONS. EQUIPPING IS BEING COMPLETED OF ONE TEST SITE, AND CONSTRUCTION OF ANOTHER IS UNDER WAY. INFORMATION IS ALSO AVAILABLE THAT AN INDUSTRIAL REACTOR IS BEING BUILT IN SOUTH AFRICA FOR PRODUCING WEAPON-TYPE PLUTONIUM AND, IN ADDITON TO A SMALL FACILITY ALREADY IN OPERATION, A NEW LARGE FACTORY FOR THE PRODUCTION OF ENRICHED URANIUM IS PLANNED. ITS CONSTRUCTION WILL ENHANCE TO A CONSIDERABLE EXTENT THE POTENTIAL OF THAT COUNTRY TO PRODUCE NUCLEAR WEAPONS.

IN VIEW OF THE ABOVE, A QUESTION ARISES REGARDING FURTHER ACTIONS TO PREVENT CONDUCTING NUCLEAR TESTS AND DEVELOPING NUCLEAR WEAPONS BY SOUTH AFRICA.

AS WE UNDERSTAND, POSSIBILITIES OF THE UNITED STATES TO EXERT DIRECT RESTRAINING INFLUENCE UPON THAT COUNTRY ARE FAR FROM BEING EXHAUSTED. NATURALLY, THE POSSIBILITIES OF THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL SHOULD ALSO BE USED IN THIS REGARD. WE, OF COURSE, WOULD BE PREPARED TO CONSIDER ALSO OTHER POSSIBLE STEPS WHICH, IN THE OPINION OF THE US GOVERNMENT, COULD BAR THE ACCESS OF SOUTH AFRICA TO NUCLEAR WEAPONS.

IT IS OBVIOUS THAT THIS QUESTION IS A MATTER OF IMMEDIATE

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CONCERN TO OUR COUNTRIES AS PERMANENT MEMBERS OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL WHICH BEAR SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR MAINTAINING PEACE AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY.

IT IS NECESSARY TO TAKE ALL POSSIBLE MEASURES IN ORDER TO PREVENT THE DEVELOPMENT OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS BY SOUTH AFRICA, TO INDUCE IT TO ACCEDE TO THE TREATY ON NON-PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND TO PLACE ALL ITS NUCLEAR ACTIVITIES UNDER THE CONTROL OF THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY.

I HOPE, MR. PRESIDENT, THAT YOU WILL CONSIDER ANY COMMUNICATION WITH UNDERSTANDING AND, ON YOUR PART, WILL SHARE WITH ME YOUR THOUGHTS ON THIS QUESTION WHICH, AS YOU UNDERSTAND, BECOMES A MATTER OF URGENCY.
(END TEXT)
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